



**Marsh Neighborhood Conservation District Commission,  
City of Cambridge**

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139 Telephone 617/349-4683  
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As owner of the property at \_\_\_\_\_, Cambridge,  
Massachusetts, I hereby make application to the Marsh Neighborhood Conservation  
District Commission for issuance of a Certificate of ( ) Appropriateness,  
( ) Non-Applicability, or ( ) Hardship for the following alteration, construction, or  
demolition (describe all exterior work proposed in the space below):

Name of Record Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Record Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Record Owner: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Applicant (if not record owner): \_\_\_\_\_

**SEE REVERSE FOR COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS  
INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE SCHEDULED FOR REVIEW**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**For Office Use Only:**

Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Hearing Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Certificate Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Withdrawn: \_\_\_\_\_ Continued: \_\_\_\_\_

### Administration of the Marsh NCD

The administration of the Marsh Neighborhood Conservation District Commission is guided by the Article III, Section 2.78 of the Code of the City of Cambridge and by the order establishing the district. Before alteration, construction or demolition of any publicly visible exterior architectural feature in the district can be initiated, the Commission must issue one of three types of certificates. A **Certificate of Appropriateness** is issued when the Commission determines that the proposed alteration, construction or demolition is not incongruous with the conservation of the district. A **Certificate of Hardship** is issued when refusal to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness would cause a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the applicant, and when the proposed alteration, construction or demolition can be approved without substantial detriment to the public welfare or substantial derogation of the purpose of the order. A **Certificate of Non-Applicability** is issued for alteration, construction or demolition that is not subject to review. The last certificate is issued by the staff of the Commission without the Commission's full review.

In making its determinations, the Commission considers the compatibility of the proposed alteration, construction or demolition with the structure's surroundings, the historical and architectural significance of the structure, the design integrity of the structure, the consistency of the proposal with the character, scale, massing and detailing of its surroundings, and the proximity of adjacent surrounding structures.

The objectives of the District are to:

1. conserve the historic architectural character of the neighborhood, including the modest character that typifies the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup>-century workers' housing of the neighborhood, and the overall simplicity of its traditional wood-frame vernacular architecture;
2. conserve the historic development patterns of the neighborhood, including its dense network of short, through-block streets, courts, and ways;
3. conserve views through yards and between houses to maintain the pattern of visual layering that characterizes The Marsh's streetscapes while respecting the residential privacy of individual properties;
4. allow for architectural diversity and individualized alterations while respecting the traditional small scale of the housing stock;
5. encourage the planting of trees and greenery to enhance the landscape amenities of the neighborhood;
6. encourage low fences to define the street edge while protecting views of houses and through yards;
7. consider traffic impacts of proposed development as they may affect traditional street patterns and pedestrian activity.

The authority of the Commission shall *not* extend to the following categories of structures or exterior architectural features, and such structures or features may be constructed or altered *without* review by the Commission:

- A. Terraces, walks, driveways, sidewalks and similar structures substantially at grade level, provided, however, that they are not to be used for parking between the street and either the principal front wall plane of a building or the principal front and side wall planes of a building that occupies a corner property.
- B. Walls and fences four feet high or less as measured from the grade of the sidewalk or the surface of the ground immediately below the wall or fence, whichever grade is lower.
- C. Storm doors and windows, screens, window air conditioners, trelliswork and similar appurtenances.
- D. Flat skylights or solar collectors parallel to and in close contact with the plane of the roof provided that all new and existing skylights and collectors are not larger than one-third of the area of the roof plane in which they are installed.
- E. Intake and exhaust vents of less than one square foot in area provided only that no more than two such vents are installed on an elevation.
- F. Permanent exterior lighting provided that it is installed in a manner that will prevent direct light from shining onto any adjacent property.
- G. Chimney caps provided they are installed in a manner that will allow their removal without altering the structure or appearance of the chimney.

### **Instructions for completing this application**

This application must be filed at the offices of the Cambridge Historical Commission, which staffs the Marsh Neighborhood Conservation District Commission, **before** work begins. It must be accompanied by the required materials listed below and should include any other materials that may assist the Commission in making its decision. **Applications must be signed by the record owner.** For buildings in condominium ownership, the record owner is the condominium association or board; for buildings in the process of being sold, the record owner is the owner at the time of the application.

Filing deadlines are listed below. The Commission welcomes advance inquiries for interpretation of the order; please contact Sally Zimmerman at the Cambridge Historical Commission if you have any questions regarding this process.

On receipt of a completed application, the Commission will schedule consideration of the application at a public hearing for the next available regularly-scheduled meeting of the Commission. **Owners are strongly urged to appear before the Commission in person.** Owners having professional consultants, such as architects, attorneys, contractors, engineers, or landscape architects, are urged to have them attend as well.

Applicants should be aware that exterior construction plans and elevations presented to the Inspectional Services Department for issuance of a building permit must conform to exterior construction plans and elevations presented to the Commission for its approval. Modifications to plans and elevations made subsequent to the Commission's approval are subject to additional review. **Failure to ensure conformance between Commission approved plans and elevations and building permit plans and elevations will result in delays and additional appearances before the Commission.**

#### **The following are required for ALL applications:**

1. Completed application form with a **written description** (see front page) of the work to be done, **including any anticipated repair or replacement of features as part of related rehabilitation.**
2. Assessor's plan of the area showing currently existing structures and the footprint of all proposed construction.
3. Detailed, dimensioned elevations and plans showing all proposed construction, alteration, or demolition; **please submit plans no larger than 11" x 17" format.**
4. Schedule of materials (may be described on plans and elevations).
5. Rendering of window treatment (may be described on plans and elevations).
6. **Any application also needing zoning relief (variance or special permit) must include Dimensional Form from Board of Zoning Appeal application.**

#### **In addition, the following are also required for all applications for new structures and for additions of more than 500 square feet:**

7. Plot plan of existing site, including a dimensioned footprint of all existing buildings, parking areas, and driveways.
8. Sun/shadow study (winter and summer solstices, AM and PM).
9. Streetscape elevation at 1/8<sup>th</sup> scale showing relative heights and distances of the surrounding buildings in comparison with any proposed new construction.